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U.S. Ponders Response To Soviet on Nuclear Test

United States officials are pondering their response to a Soviet denial that a record Russian underground nuclear test on Oct. 27 "vented" into the atmosphere.

The United States detected some radioactive material in the atmosphere, American sources have said, but now are confronted with a carefully phrased Soviet denial that would appear to conflict totally with the American detection.

What Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin is reported to have said to the State Department last Thursday is that the Soviet blast fully conformed with the partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963, and that there was "no venting."

Informed sources suggest that the Soviet Union appears to be using the term in one sense, to deny a treaty violation, and the United States is using it in a more limited sense, without alleging an actual treaty violation.

The United States does not want to make a major issue of the affair because it is not alleging a deliberate violation, it was said, but equally it does not want to leave the record so clouded with an apparent contradiction. Official sources said only that the matter is still under study.